AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1.-12. (canceled)

13. (withdrawn-currently amended): A method of preparing thea *Mycobacterium* promoter of claim 23~~expression system for high-throughput screening and developing inhibitors against mycobacteria under low carbon source~~, said process comprising the steps of:

(a) isolating said promoter from *Mycobacterium* DNA~~ and characterizing a 200 bp promoter sequence having SEQ ID NO. 2 from nucleotide sequence of 1.5 kb DNA fragment upstream of *M.tuberculosis* gene *relA/spoT*~~,

(b) ligating the isolated promoter sequence of step (a) into a plasmid vector~~vector pSAK12, and~~

~~(c) studying the expression of the promoter sequence under low carbon source or carbon starved conditions~~.

14. (withdrawn-currently amended): The~~A~~ process of~~as claimed in~~ claim 13, wherein the *Mycobacterium* promoter is 2.5 fold~~folds~~ more active in *M. Smegmatis* than the~~ conventional~~ heat shock protein promoter (P_{hsp60})~~(heat shock protein promoter) promoter~~.

15. (withdrawn-currently amended): A process of expressing a reporter gene in *M. smegmatis* under carbon starved conditions, the process comprising the step of growing *M. smegmatis* containing the promoter of claim 28~~as claimed in claim 13~~, wherein the carbon source is~~,~~ about 2.5 to 0.001% glucose~~ is in the range of about 2.5 to 0.001%~~.

16. (withdrawn-currently amended): The~~A~~ process of~~as claimed in~~ claim 15~~14~~, wherein the carbon source is about 2 to 0.02%~~,~~ glucose~~ is in the range of about 2 to 0.02%~~.

17. (withdrawn-currently amended): The~~A~~ process of~~as claimed in~~ claim 15~~13~~, wherein the~~percentage inhibition~~ growth of the *M. smegmatis*~~mycobacteria in presence of the promoter and in presence of inhibitor ethambutol~~ is reduced by~~in the range of~~ about 6 to 25% by the presence of ethambutol~~ in presence of 0.02 % glucose i.e under starved conditions~~.

18. (withdrawn-currently amended): The~~A~~ process of~~as claimed in~~ claim 17, wherein the~~percentage inhibition~~ growth of the *M. smegmatis*~~mycobacteria in the presence of the promoter and in presence of inhibitor ethambutol~~ is reduced by~~in the range of~~ about 7 to 21% by the presence of ethambutol~~ in presence of 0.02 % glucose i.e under starved conditions~~.

19. (withdrawn-currently amended): The~~A~~ process of~~as claimed in~~ claim 15~~13~~, wherein the~~percentage inhibition~~ growth of the *M.* smegmatis~~mycobacteria in presence of the promoter~~

~~and in presence of inhibitor isoniazide~~ is reduced by~~in the range of~~ about 15 to 45% by the presence of isoniazid ~~in presence of 0.02 % glucose i.e under starved conditions~~.

20. (withdrawn-currently amended): The~~A~~ process of~~as claimed in~~ claim 19, wherein the~~percentage inhibition~~ growth of the *M. smegmatis*~~*mycobacteria* in presence of the promoter and in presence of inhibitor isoniazide~~ is reduced by~~in the range of~~ about 18 to 40 % in the presence of isoniazid ~~in presence of 0.02 % glucose i.e under starved conditions~~.

21. (withdrawn-currently amended): The~~A~~ process of~~as claimed in~~ claim 15~~13~~, wherein the~~percentage inhibition~~ growth of the *M. smegmatis*~~mycobacteria in presence of the promoter and in presence of inhibitor rifampicin~~ is reduced by~~in the range of~~ about 20 to 45% by the presence of rifampicin ~~in presence of 0.02 % glucose i.e under starved conditions~~.

22. (withdrawn-currently amended): The~~A~~ process of~~as claimed in~~ claim 21, wherein the~~percentage inhibition~~ growth of the *M. smegmatis*~~mycobacteria in presence of the promoter and in presence of inhibitor rifampicin~~ is reduced by~~in the range of~~ about 21 to 41% by the presence of rifamipicin ~~in presence of 0.02 % glucose i.e under starved conditions~~.

23. (new) A *Mycobacterium* promoter, wherein the promoter is stable in *M. smegmatis* and *E. coli,* and consists essentially of the 200 base pair fragment upstream and adjacent to the *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* relA/SpoT gene.

24. (new) The *Mycobacterium* promoter of claim 23, wherein the promoter is operatively linked to a reporter gene.

25. (new) The *Mycobacterium* promoter of claim 24, wherein said reporter gene is LacZ.

26. (new) The *Mycobacterium* promoter of claim 24, wherein said reporter gene is xylE.

27. (new) The *Mycobacterium* promoter of claim 24, wherein the promoter is 2.5 fold more active in *M. smegmatis* than the heat shock protein promoter (P_{hsp60}).

28 (new) The *Mycobacterium* promoter of claim 24, wherein the promoter is further contained in a plasmid with an Ampicillin or Kanamycin resistance marker.

29. (new) The *Mycobacterium* promoter of claim 23, wherein the promoter consists of SEQ ID NO:2.